

**APPARATUS FOR SIZE-DEPENDENT SAMPLING FOR
MANAGING A DATA NETWORK****ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides apparatus for sampling data flows in a data network in order to estimate a total data volume in the network. Sampling the data flows in the data network reduces the network resources that must be expended by the network to support the associated activity. The present invention enables the service provider of the data network to control sampled volumes in relation to the desired accuracy. The control can be either static or can be dynamic for cases in which the data volumes are changing as a function of time.